

Prescription Drug Facts: Lunesta (Eszopiclone)

What is this drug for?	To make it easier to fall or to stay asleep
Who might consider taking it?	Adults age 18 and older with insomnia for at least 1 month
Who should NOT take it?	People under age 18
Recommended testing	No blood tests, watch out for abnormal behavior
Other things to consider doing	Reducing caffeine (especially at night), exercise, regular bedtime, avoid daytime naps

LUNESTA STUDY FINDINGS

788 healthy adults with insomnia for at least 1 month -- sleeping less than 6.5 hours per night and/or taking more than 30 minutes to fall asleep-- were given LUNESTA or a sugar pill nightly for 6 months. Here's what happened:

What difference did LUNESTA make?	People given a sugar pill	People given LUNESTA (3 mg each night)
Did LUNESTA help? LUNESTA users fell asleep faster (15 minutes faster)	45 minutes to fall asleep	30 minutes to fall asleep
LUNESTA users slept longer (37 minutes longer)	5 hours 45 minutes	6 hours 22 minutes
Did LUNESTA have side effects? <i>Life threatening side effects</i> No difference between LUNESTA and a sugar pill	None observed	
<i>Symptom side effects</i> More had unpleasant taste in their mouth (additional 20% due to drug)	6% 6 in 100	26% 26 in 100
More had dizziness (additional 7% due to drug)	3% 3 in 100	10% 10 in 100
More had drowsiness (additional 6% due to drug)	3% 3 in 100	9% 9 in 100
More had dry mouth (additional 5% due to drug)	2% 2 in 100	7% 7 in 100
More had nausea (additional 5% due to drug)	6% 6 in 100	11% 11 in 100

How long has the drug been in use?

Lunesta was approved by FDA in 2005. As with all new drugs we simply don't know how its safety record will hold up over time. In general, if there are unforeseen, serious drug side effects, they emerge after the drug is on the market (when a large enough number of people have used the drug).